

Women Pioneers in Civil Engineering and Architecture in Italy: Emma Strada and Ada Bursi.

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MoMoWo 1ST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE-WORKSHOP

Women designers, craftswomen, architects
and engineers between 1918 and 1945

PROGRAMME AND ABSTRACTS

UNIVERSITY OF LEIDEN // THE NETHERLANDS
Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society

23-24-25 SEPTEMBER 2015



WOMEN'S CREATIVITY SINCE
THE MODERN MOVEMENT

Co-funded by the
Creative Europe Programme
of the European Union



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Women Designers, Craftswomen, Architects and Engineers between 1918 and 1945 MoMoWo 1st International Conference-Workshop

Programme and Abstracts

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MoMoWo SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

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ABSTRACTS

-  **The Role of Spanish Women in the House and Craftwork in the First Years of Franco's Regime: the Women's Section** - MoMoWo **Ana María Fernández García**, University of Oviedo
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After the Civil War, Franco's Dictatorship in Spain revitalized the so called Women's Section, created in 1934 as the female section of the Falange political movement. It was an organization similar to those in Germany or Italy, which promoted the role of women as mothers and wives in accordance with the ideology of the regime.

Losing the war in 1939 implied the end of the initiatives of the Republic to dignify women, promote their access to higher education and their participation in public social activities. Franco's regime made women go back to their homes, (mostly in the first decades) making fun of republican women considering them as "tomboys" or depraved who wanted to subvert the biological order of housebound women. It is in this historical and ideological framework that we will analyze how the Women's Section was created and how they organized training courses for women as "home managers". These courses aimed to train women not only in daily matters such as cooking, childcare or domestic tasks, but also in the revival of popular craftworks, decoration and furnishing as well as manual arts. In order to collect all this information, different resources will be used, including photographs, newspapers and archives, and even some audiovisual resources of the news programs during Franco's regime.

-  **Women Pioneers in Civil Engineering and Architecture in Italy: Emma Strada and Ada Bursi** - MoMoWo **Caterina Franchini**, Interuniversity Department of Regional & Urban Studies and Planning, Politecnico di Torino – DIST
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It is known that Italian culture has always discriminated against women especially in the workplace. Why is it this way? Before and after World War II, women civil engineers and architects employed strategies to overcome their gender marginality. Did these strategies influence their experiences within the profession and the recognition they have received? What were the factors that enabled women to enter into the patriarchal spheres of the professions? What were the roles of the first female civil engineers and architects in Italy and in Turin which was the capital of industry? What were the motivations underlying their choice of profession and what was their reception in the male work world? The history of almost unknown female pioneers helps answer these questions.

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MoMoWo - Women's Creativity since the Modern Movement

The ambition of MoMoWo European cultural project goes beyond the mere cliché that woman architects, civil engineers and designers represent an "unexploited creative potential" which the economy should make use of; or that women architects and designers should be entrusted with tasks especially related to women, so as to make certain built spaces or products even more successful, on the grounds that women have "a different view of things". Thus, MoMoWo tackles a real equal opportunities theme in both past and present times. As the title suggests, the starting point of the project is the Modern Movement, intended as a moment of great cultural ferment as well as a political and social turning point. The Modern Movement also represents the first historical landmark in the emancipation of women in the professions of architecture and engineering. The goal of the project is the creation of a bridge connecting past, present and future generations of women. The project intends to build up a heritage and a network of know-how and skills trans-nationwide going beyond the project itself.

Emilia Garda, MoMoWo Project Leader

